



# Ratio Mountain Fire

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Fire Information: 406-865-0941

[Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF Wildland Fire Information Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Beaverhead-Deerlodge-NF-Wildland-Fire-Information)

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/mtbdf-ratio-mountain>

**August 24, 2024 9:00 a.m.**



**Incident Commander:** Jonathan Stonelake, Scott Drake (T)

**Location:** 15 miles north/northwest of Whitehall, MT

**Start Date:** 8/18/2024

**Cause:** Lightning

**Size:** estimated at 587 acres

**Resources on Site:** 2 crews; 3 engines; helicopters available to assist

**Total Personnel:** 85

The Ratio Mountain Fire, located between Ratio Mountain and Whitetail Reservoir, is burning in an area that has recently experienced several large fires. Fire footprints (or previously burned areas) lie to the north (State Creek Fire of 2020), the south (McClusky Fire of 2019), and the west (Placer Fire of 2021) of the fire location.

The entire area, including the previous fire footprints and the area immediately surrounding the Ratio Mountain fire, contains a large concentration of standing dead trees ("snags") that pose challenges to ensuring firefighter safety and in responding to potential medical emergencies, jeopardizing the well-being of firefighters and other responders.

Fire managers from the Forest, working in collaboration with local Jefferson County officials and cooperating agency representatives from the DNRC and BLM, have identified, mapped, and prioritized critical values at risk in the fire area. These inter-agency, values-based discussions are critical in fire management, informing the decision-making process.

## **CURRENT STATUS/PLANNED ACTIONS:**

Strategic firing operations were successfully implemented on the eastern side of the fire, as firefighters used an Unmanned Aircraft System ("drone") and hand ignitions to ignite and burn the fuels between the active fire edge and the constructed control lines from previous fire incidents along the Hay Canyon Road, working southerly along Pony Creek.

The crews have progressed approximately 70% of the way with completion of firing operations along this section of line. Continuation of this firing operation over the next few days will depend on fuel and weather conditions. This fire suppression tactic is an effective method of reducing the available fuels ahead of an active fire edge, while reducing the potential for negative impacts to the identified and prioritized values.

Smoke was visible in several areas, including the Whitetail Valley and the Interstate 90 corridor near Whitehall.

## **WEATHER AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:**

The fire area received light precipitation yesterday afternoon, but the coverage was spotty and sporadic and not enough to impact fire behavior significantly. Fire behavior was limited to isolated torching, creeping, and backing. The forecast calls for widespread wetting rain and much cooler temperatures through the weekend.

## **CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS:**

The Forest has issued an area closure around the fire area, north of Whitehall on the Butte Ranger District. An area closure often involves specific trail and road sections. The area closure information and maps can be found on the Forest website, under the Closures and Alerts tab. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/bdnf/alerts-notices>



This closure applies to the following National Forest System (NFS) lands, approximately 15 miles north of Whitehall.

All National Forest System lands within:

- T3N, R5W, SECTIONS 1, 2, 3
- T4N, R5W SECTION 35

Closures surrounding a fire area are necessary to protect the safety and welfare of the public and provide for safe firefighting efforts and access.

The Forest is in Stage 1 Fire Restrictions. Campfires are allowed only in a permanent metal fire grate/ring provided by the Forest Service in a designated, developed recreation site. Smoking is restricted to vehicles, in buildings, or in an area clear of flammable materials. Devices with an on/off switch that use LPG fuels are allowed in an area clear of flammable materials within 3 feet of the device.

